

ARTS AND SCIENCES CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

meeting of September 24, 2013

meeting in BCC 204

Approved on October 8, 2013

Attending: Professors Fernandez, Garvey, Miecznikowski, Nantz, Pagano, Peduti, Rosivach, Sauer; Dean Crabtree; Associate Dean Im

The outgoing chair of the committee, Prof. Rosivach, convened the meeting at 3:31 pm.

1. appointment of recording secretary for the meeting: Prof. Rosivach.

2. chair's report:

As outgoing chair Prof. Rosivach informed the new members of the committee that a number of items are handled by the committee chair, who now reports these items to the committee each meeting, to have a record of them in the minutes. Prof. Rosivach reported that he had:

a. concurred that changes in Psychology department course renumbering and prerequisites for some courses did not involve the content of the changed courses (and therefore needn't come before the committee).

b. concurred that the change in title of HI 10 (Origins of the Modern World Since 1500) did not involve the content of the course (and therefore needn't come before the committee)

3. election of new chair of the committee:

Prof. Miecznikowski was nominated by Prof. Fernandez, and was elected chair by the unanimous vote of the committee.

4. annual motion on Associate Dean Im as Dean Crabtree's representative in her absence:

Prof. Rosivach so moved; the motion passed on the unanimous vote of the committee.

5. approval of minutes of April 9, 2013 meeting:

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved, all votes in favor and three abstentions.

6. standing business: approval of new course proposals

a. **PY 321:** Prof. Rosivach explained that this course had been approved by the department before the revised version of the New Course Proposal form had been posted on the Arts and Sciences web site. Prof. Peduti noted that the grading system in the proposed syllabus was at variance with the official percentage-letter grade equivalences. Dean Im said that everyone should follow the policies in the *Catalogue* and the *Journal of Record*. Prof. Fernandez observed that in practice many professors were inclined to a level of generosity such as was found in the proposed syllabus. Prof. Rosivach noted that individual practice varied widely and had been tolerated by the committee in the past; perhaps it was time for the committee to review the policy and recommend changes to the UCC. The course was approved by unanimous vote of the committee with the understanding that the chair would ask Prof. Andreychik to bring his grading in the course in line with current policy.

a1. Prof Rosivach moved to add the question of **grade equivalences** to the committee's agenda. The motion was approved by the unanimous vote of the committee.

b. **BI 318L:** Replying to a question from the chair, Prof. Sauer said that the course involving a trip to Brazil was a different course, which did not have an associate lab. Prof. Sauer also explained that the optional nature of the lab had been discussed in the Biology department and it was felt that those students who did not take the lab would not be at a disadvantage in the course. Replying to Dean Crabtree, Prof. Sauer said that the lab would count as a professor's third course, and that the department felt that it could accommodate this. Dean Crabtree informed the committee that she would consider this matter when the course reached her for approval. Replying to a question from Prof. Nantz, Prof. Sauer said that there were other courses with optional labs, e.g. biochem. Prof. Fernandez explained that majors were required to take four labs, and that this course would allow a student who needed it to pick up an extra lab. She also pointed out that this was a service-learning course, which are very rare in the natural sciences. The course was approved by the unanimous vote of the committee.

c. **ENW 207:** Prof. Nantz observed that there seemed to be a lot of prerequisites for the course, but Prof. Garvey believed that it was rather that any one of the courses listed could serve as a prerequisite; the chair will check to confirm this. Replying to a question from Dean Crabtree Prof. Rosivach explained that this was not a special topics course but rather what the committee has been calling sub-level shell courses, which are on the committee's agenda as old business. Dean Im thought that courses that would vary this substantially from year to year were potentially problematic, if this were viewed as a way of getting around the approval process for new courses, and expressed the view that there must be some process that will ensure that the goals and outcomes of the course be the same in its multiple iterations. Prof. Pagano said that the substance of the course did not appear to change in its multiple iterations, and Prof. Garvey agreed that the proposal was detailed enough in this regard. Dean Crabtree noted that departmental minutes had not been attached to the proposal in Mentor. The course was approved by the unanimous vote of the committee pending the uploading of departmental minutes to Mentor.

d. **ENW 307:** The chair noted that the departmental minutes for this course were also missing. Dean Im observed that the goals and outcomes of the course are clear enough that they can be followed in its various iterations. Prof. Sauer questioned whether the grading system in this course was consistent with *Journal of Record* policy. Dean Crabtree explained that enough of students in this course did not do all of the work that one would get a normal distribution of grades following the procedure in the proposal. Dean Crabtree and Prof. Sauer agreed that the grading policy in the *Journal of Record* was over-determined, but the committee will take this up separately. The course was approved by the unanimous vote of the committee pending the uploading of departmental minutes to Mentor.

e. **EN 399:** The chair noted that the departmental minutes for this course were also missing. Prof. Nantz asked if this was just turning a set of independent studies, which professors would do as unpaid overload, into a course that would be part of their regular teaching schedule. Dean Crabtree said that should would consider this resource issue when the course came to her for approval: if it is to be a regular course it will have to meet the enrollment levels expected of regular courses. Prof. Peduti saw a value in the group experience, which the course would provide, in contrast to independent studies. Dean Im explained that the Writing program currently had a practicum course, which worked well for professional writing but not as well for creative writing. Prof. Nantz was concerned that cutting down on independent studies, which was a stated goal of the proposal, might be unfair to students. Dean Crabtree said that in fact there have been too many independent studies, and that majors are better served by regular courses than by a large number of relatively unstructured independent studies. Questions were raised about the appropriateness of calling the course a “capstone” when it would include both juniors and seniors, and speaking of a “senior thesis,” which is not current practice in the College. It was agreed that the proposal would be returned to the English department for further clarification and that the chair would explain the committee’s concerns.

f. **CO 333:** Prof. Nantz said that this would be an appropriate course to cross-list with journalism. Dean Crabtree said that students find a way to manage this through combining their majors and minors; Communications does not have enough space in its classes to accommodate non-majors, and the prerequisites for all but entry-level courses would also be a barrier. Prof. Fernandez asked if the Facebook requirement would be a problem, but Dean Crabtree said this is the way of the times. The course was approved by the unanimous vote of the committee.

g. **CO 332:** Dean Crabtree mentioned that this course had previously been offered as a special-topics course and was now being added to the roster of regular courses. Prof. Nantz noted that the course had only a 100-level prerequisite and asked whether it shouldn’t have a prerequisite at the 200 level. Dean Im said there was no *Journal of Record* policy on this; having done some research on this he had found that in the history of the University there had been only two changes in the course numbering system, but there is no record of the rationale behind either change. Dean Im also noted that the issue had come up in the UCC but was never resolved.

Prof. Peduti noted, in regard to grading, that there was no correlation between total points and letter grades. The course was approved by the unanimous vote of the committee with the understanding that the course syllabus will clarify how points are converted into a letter grade.

h. **CO 324:** Professor Sauer noted that the proposal did not contain a week-by-week schedule showing how the course would progress through the material. Prof. Miecznikowski pointed out that one could find this information in the list of course readings. Prof. Rosivach noted that neither the New Course Proposal form nor the *Journal of Record* requires a week-by-week schedule as part of a syllabus. The course was approved by the unanimous vote of the committee.

7. old business:

The chair asked the previous chair, Prof. Rosivach, to briefly explain these items, which had been carried over from the last year's agenda.

a. **policy on adjunct faculty submitting new course proposals:** Prof. Rosivach explained that this item had arisen in connection with the program review for Film, Television and Media, and that the underlying issue was the desirability of basing a major on a large number of courses that could only be taught by adjunct faculty. Dean Crabtree volunteered Dean Im to gather information on current practice in this regard.

b. **vetting of graduate courses by relevant departments:** This issue had arisen in connection with the approval of a course in the Liberal Studies program which seemed to be historical, and was taught by an adjunct member of the History department, but had been reviewed only by the Liberal Studies committee. Dean Crabtree stressed that the Liberal Studies program was meant to be interdisciplinary, not multidisciplinary, and she worried about departments being excessively proprietary about courses that overlapped their discipline. Prof. Rosivach pointed out that it was a matter of getting input from the departments with appropriate disciplinary expertise, not of giving these departments a veto over such courses. Dean Im added that it would improve the Liberal Studies program's credibility if its courses were vetted by the relevant departments. Prof. Rosivach and Dean Im agreed to serve as a subcommittee to prepare a proposal for the committee's consideration.

c. **consistent numbering scheme for graduate courses:** Again, something that came up in connection with the approval graduate courses last semester. Is a policy of consistency desirable? What form would it take?

d. **policy on sub-level shell courses:** These are courses that have the same general goals but treat different genres, etc. in their successive iterations, and which a student could take more than once. The issue was first raised in connection with courses in Film, Television and Media,

and we saw it again today in connection with the two Writing courses. The committee felt that some policy was needed to insure adequate review of the multiple iterations.

8. new business:

The chair asked Prof. Rosivach, who as outgoing chair had prepared the agenda for today's meeting, to briefly explain these items.

a. **Registrar's new course form:** The new form requires the signature of the ASCC's chair, which unnecessarily complicates the course-submission process and runs counter to the current project to streamline the process and ensure consistency by moving all materials through Mentor. Dean Im said that the new form had come as a surprise to him and recommended that nothing be done until he has a chance to discuss the form with Sue Bickel in the Registrar's office.

b. **adding course attributes to new course proposal form:** This had been brought to his attention by Prof. Bucki as chair of the History department. Adding the Banner attributes (what requirements a course fulfills) to the initial proposal will save additional correspondence later in the process. Dean Im said that doing this would be desirable.

c. **expand ASCC review of one-week courses to include all non-conventional courses, including on-line ones:** Prof. Rosivach said that he had added this item on his own initiative since courses were now being offered in a wide variety of non-conventional formats, and not just as one-week courses. Dean Im said that he was supportive of the proposal, and added that it would be a good idea to develop a policy on how on-line course work translates into course teaching hours, adding that it would be good to have Christine Siegel from the AAVP's office sit in on these discussions. Dean Im also told the committee that he had requested Paige Francis to look into other Jesuit schools' policies on on-line courses and she had found nothing.

9. other business: none.

10. adjournment: 5:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Vincent J. Rosivach
secretary *pro tem*